

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

Please amend claims 11 and 30, as shown below. This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the Application:

Claims 1 - 10 (canceled)

1 **Claim 11** (currently amended): A cassette having a hollow for receiving and retaining a tissue specimen for fluid treatment preparatory to histological examination, comprising a top portion having a perforated bottom wall and a bottom portion snap or friction mounted to the top portion, the bottom portion having ~~[[a]] side and bottom walls~~ [[wall]] removable along a frangible tear line in said side walls.

2
Claim 12 (previously presented): The cassette of claim 11, wherein said removable side wall bridges said top and bottom portions.

3
Claim 13 (previously presented): The cassette of claim 11, wherein said removable side wall includes a pair of frangible tear lines.

4
Claim 14 (previously presented): The cassette of claim 11, wherein said removable side wall includes a projecting tab to facilitate removal of said side wall.

5
Claim 15 (previously presented): The cassette of claim 11, wherein said top and bottom portions are molded of a synthetic plastic material.

6
Claim 16 (previously presented): The cassette of claim 11, further comprising a pre-formed foam block in said hollow.

7
Claim 17 (previously presented): The cassette of claim 11, further comprising agarose in said hollow.

⁸
Claim ~~18~~ (previously presented): The cassette of claim ~~11~~¹, further comprising both agarose and a pre-formed foam block in said hollow.

⁹
Claim ~~19~~ (previously presented): The cassette of claim ~~16~~⁶, further comprising filter paper positioned in said hollow to retard egress of molten paraffin.

¹⁰
Claim ~~20~~ (previously presented): A method for preparing a tissue sample for analysis, comprising the steps of:

- (a) orienting the tissue sample in the cassette of claim ~~11~~¹;
- (b) embedding an oriented tissue sample in a porous embedding media; and
- (c) directly processing the embedded tissue sample with tissue processing reagents while maintaining the original orientation of the sample without a post-processing paraffin-embedding step.

¹¹
Claim ~~21~~ (previously presented): The method of claim ~~20~~¹⁰, wherein the porous embedding media comprises agarose.

¹²
Claim ~~22~~ (previously presented): The method of claim ~~20~~¹⁰, wherein the porous embedding media comprises a pre-formed foam.

¹³
Claim ~~23~~ (previously presented): The method of claim ~~22~~¹², wherein the tissue sample is oriented in an opening or depression formed in said pre-formed foam.

¹⁴
Claim ~~24~~ (previously presented): The method of claim ~~23~~¹³, including the step of forming said opening or depression by cutting, drilling, punching or molding.

¹⁵
Claim ~~25~~ (previously presented): The method of claim ~~23~~¹³, wherein the tissue sample is embedded flush with or below an outer surface of the pre-formed foam.

¹⁴
Claim ~~26~~ (previously presented): The method of claim ¹³~~23~~, wherein the pre-formed foam comprises a preformed block of phenolic foam.

¹⁷
Claim ~~27~~ (previously presented): The method of claim ¹¹~~21~~, wherein said agarose has a melting point in the range of about 55 to 65°C.

¹⁸
Claim ~~28~~ (previously presented): The method of claim ¹⁰~~20~~, further including the step of sectioning the embedded tissue sample following processing.

¹⁹
Claim ~~29~~ (previously presented): The method of claim ¹⁰~~20~~, wherein said tissue processing reagents are selected from the group consisting essentially of aqueous formalin, water, xylene, alcohol and paraffin.

²⁰
Claim ~~30~~ (currently amended): A hollow cassette for receiving and retaining a tissue specimen for fluid treatment preparatory to histological examination, comprising a top portion having a perforated bottom wall and a bottom portion snap or friction mounted to the top portion, the bottom portion having [[a]] side and bottom walls [[wall]] removable along a frangible tear line in said side walls, the hollow being filled, at least in part, by a porous embedding medium.

²¹
Claim ~~31~~ (previously presented): The cassette of claim ²⁰~~31~~, wherein said porous embedding medium comprises agarose and/or a pre-formed foam.

²²
Claim ~~32~~ (previously presented): The cassette of claim ²⁰~~30~~, wherein said removable side wall bridges said top and bottom portions.

²³
Claim ~~33~~ (previously presented): The cassette of claim ²⁰~~30~~, wherein said removable side wall includes a pair of frangible tear lines.

²⁴
Claim ~~34~~ (previously presented): The cassette of claim ²⁰~~30~~, wherein said removable side wall includes a projecting tab to facilitate removal of said side wall.

²⁵
Claim ~~35~~ (previously presented): The cassette of claim ²⁰~~30~~, wherein said top and bottom portions are molded of a synthetic plastic material.

²⁶
Claim ~~36~~ (previously presented): The cassette of claim ²¹~~31~~, and further comprising filter paper positioned within the cassette to retard egress of molten paraffin.

²⁷
Claim ~~37~~ (previously presented): The cassette of claim ²¹~~31~~, wherein the agarose has a melting point in the range of 55 to 65° C.

²⁸
Claim ~~38~~ (previously presented): The cassette of claim ²¹~~31~~, wherein the foam comprises a phenolic foam.

²⁹
Claim ~~39~~ (previously presented): A cassette having a hollow for receiving and retaining a tissue specimen for fluid treatment preparatory to histological examination, comprising a top portion having a perforated bottom wall and a bottom portion snap or friction mounted to the top portion, the bottom portion having a side wall removable along a tear line, said cassette further comprising a pre-formed foam block and/or agarose in said hollow.

³⁰
Claim ~~40~~ (previously presented): The cassette of claim ²⁹~~39~~, wherein said removable side wall bridges said top and bottom portions.

³¹
Claim ~~41~~ (previously presented): The cassette of claim ²⁹~~39~~, wherein said removable side wall includes a pair of tear lines.

³²
Claim ~~42~~ (previously presented): The cassette of claim ²⁹~~39~~, wherein said removable side wall includes a projecting tab to facilitate removal of said side wall.

³³
Claim ~~43~~ (previously presented): The cassette of claim ²⁹~~39~~, wherein said top and bottom portions are molded of a synthetic plastic material.

³⁴
Claim ~~44~~ (previously presented): The cassette of claim ²⁹~~39~~, further comprising both agarose and a pre-formed foam block in said hollow.

³⁵
Claim ~~45~~ (previously presented): The cassette of claim ²⁹~~39~~, further comprising filter paper positioned in said hollow to retard egress of molten paraffin.

³⁶
Claim ~~46~~ (previously presented): A method for preparing a tissue sample for analysis, comprising the steps of:

- (a) orienting the tissue sample in the cassette of claim ²⁹~~39~~;
- (b) embedding an oriented tissue sample in a porous embedding media; and
- (c) directly processing the embedded tissue sample with tissue processing reagents while maintaining the original orientation of the sample without a post-processing paraffin-embedding step.

³⁷
Claim ~~47~~ (previously presented): The method of claim ³⁶~~46~~, wherein the tissue sample is oriented in an opening or depression formed in said pre-formed foam.

³⁸
Claim ~~48~~ (previously presented): The method of claim ³⁶~~46~~, including the step of forming said opening or depression by cutting, drilling, punching or molding.

³⁹
Claim ~~49~~ (previously presented): The method of claim ³⁷~~47~~, wherein the tissue sample is embedded flush with or below an outer surface of the pre-formed foam.

⁴⁰
Claim ~~50~~ (previously presented): The method of claim ³⁷~~47~~, wherein the pre-formed foam comprises a preformed block of phenolic foam.

⁴¹
Claim ~~51~~ (previously presented): The method of claim ³⁴~~46~~, wherein said agarose has a melting point in the range of about 55 to 65°C.

⁴²
Claim ~~52~~ (previously presented): The method of claim ³⁶~~46~~, further including the step of sectioning the embedded tissue sample following processing.

⁴³
Claim ~~53~~ (previously presented): The method of claim ³⁶~~46~~, wherein said tissue processing reagents are selected from the group consisting essentially of aqueous formalin, water, xylene, alcohol and paraffin.

⁴⁴
Claim ~~54~~ (previously presented): A hollow cassette for receiving and retaining a tissue specimen for fluid treatment preparatory to histological examination, comprising a top portion having a perforated bottom wall and a bottom portion snap or friction mounted to the top portion, the bottom portion having a side wall removable along a tear line, the hollow being filled, at least in part, by a porous embedding medium, which comprises agarose and/or a pre-formed foam.

⁴⁵
Claim ~~55~~ (previously presented): The cassette of claim ⁴⁴~~54~~, wherein said removable side wall bridges said top and bottom portions.

⁴⁶
Claim ~~56~~ (previously presented): The cassette of claim ⁴⁴~~54~~, wherein said removable side wall includes a pair of tear lines.

⁴⁷
Claim ~~57~~ (previously presented): The cassette of claim ⁴⁴~~54~~, wherein said removable side wall includes a projecting tab to facilitate removal of said side wall.

⁴⁸
Claim ~~58~~ (previously presented): The cassette of claim ⁴⁴~~54~~, wherein said top and bottom portions are molded of a synthetic plastic material.

Claim ⁴⁹~~59~~ (previously presented): The cassette of claim ⁴⁴~~54~~, and further comprising filter paper positioned within the cassette to retard egress of molten paraffin.

Claim ⁵⁰~~60~~ (previously presented): The cassette of claim ⁴⁴~~54~~, wherein the agarose has a melting point in the range of 55 to 65° C.

Claim ⁵¹~~61~~ (previously presented): The cassette of claim ⁴⁴~~54~~, wherein the foam comprises a phenolic foam.

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